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THE CHARTER OF WULFRÚN

TO

THE MONASTERY AT "HAMTUN"

(WOLVERHAMPTON).

BY

W. H. DUIGNAN.

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THE CHARTER OF WULFRÚN

TO THE

MONASTERY AT "HAMTUN."

THE original of this interesting Charter is not known to be in existence, and has not been heard of since the year 1640, when Sir William Dugdale, or Roger Dodsworth, is supposed to have copied it. If then extant, it was in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of the Royal Chapel of Windsor. The Deaneries of Windsor and Wolverhampton were united by Edward IV., and the Wolverhampton records were at the same time probably transferred to Windsor. Dugdale and Dodsworth were joint Editors of the first edition of the Monasticon, and to them we are indebted for the preservation of this valuable local record. The head note in the Monasticon, "from the autograph itself," leads one to suppose that the original document was before the copyist; but there is some reason to doubt it, and possibly he had only an old chartulary. The formal parts of the deed, as was customary, are in Latin; the description of the properties is in Anglo-Saxon. The Latin portion, as printed in the Monasticon, and by Oliver, ("Account of the Collegiate Church of Wolverhampton, 1836"), is full of errors, and shows great carelessness in the copying. The

Monasticon gives the parcels both in Latin and Anglo-Saxon, the latter being badly and inaccurately printed. The Latin translation was evidently made by a person imperfectly acquainted with Anglo-Saxon; and the blanks in the latter portion exist also in the Latin, showing that the original Charter had, in places, become illegible when the Latin translation was made. For these reasons it seems doubtful if Dugdale or Dodsworth saw the original Charter. The text has been carefully revised and translated by my friend, Mr. William Henry Stevenson, of Nottingham, an accomplished Anglo-Saxon scholar, and the learned editor of the "Records of the Borough of Nottingham." The Charter is not given in the Codex Diplomaticus, though Kemble professes to include every Anglo-Saxon Charter contained in the Monasticon.

Of Wulfrún we know little. Sir William Dugdale says she was sister of King Edgar, but he gives no authority. Edgar's wife was named Elfthryth, and Wulfrún's only daughter bore the same name, which may be some evidence of relationship. Plot says she was the widow of Aldhelm Duke of Northampton, but he also gives no authority. That she was a lady of rank is certain, for the A.S. Chronicle tells, under the year 943, "Olaf [1] took Tamworth by storm, and great slaughter was made on either side; and the Danes had the victory, and led away great booty with them: there, during the pillage, was Wulfrún taken." How they treated her, and whether she was ransomed, rescued, or escaped, we shall never know. She herself tells us, in touching and poetical language, that she had an only daughter, Elfthryth, who had died; it is probable that she also had a son living, as "Wulfric, Wulfrún's son," is one of the witnesses to a Charter of King Ethelred, anno 997.

"Hámtún" did not bear her name till some years after her death. Domesday styles it *Hantone*, and *Handone*, but Domesday is not to be depended on for spelling. The Conqueror, in his Charter to Sampson his Chaplain, terms it Wulvrene-hamton. In the Pipe

[1] The Danish King of Northumbria.

Perhaps of King Ethelred II.

Rolls of the 13th century, and in a Charter of Dean Geoffrey, temp. K. John, it is Wulfrun-hamton and Wulfrun-hampton. The multiplicity of Hamtuns led to the adoption of prefixes or suffixes, and hence we have Wolverne-hampton, South-hampton, North-hampton, Hampton-in-Arden, &c. In composition the *rún* of *Wulfrún* would be shortened according to rule, and we get, by metathesis of the *r*, *Wolverne* and *Wolverene*, which in thirteenth and fourteenth century deeds we find the common prefix to Hamton or Hampton. The excrescent *p* is the natural result of accent falling upon *m*.

The Charter does not tell us where it was signed; but, from the number and rank of the subscribers, it must have been completed at a sitting of the "Witan." In September 994, the Danes were, the Chronicle tells us, "burning and harrying and doing unspeakable evil;" and "the King and his Witan resolved they should be sent to, and promised tribute and food, provided they would cease from ravaging; and they accepted that." The amount paid to the Danes on this occasion was £16,000, a vast sum in those days. Wulfrún, quietly endowing monasteries, and the Church increasing its possessions, whilst the Northmen were wasting the country, reminds us of Jeremiah, in prison at Jerusalem when besieged by the Chaldeans, buying land of Hanameel,—they probably thought, as he did, "houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

The style of the Latin part of the deed is very pompous and inflated; it is occasionally difficult to turn the bombast of the composer into intelligible English. The Anglo-Saxon portion—doubtless the work of another scribe—is terse, and so clear and accurate that anyone acquainted with the neighbourhood would, but for the altered state of the country, find little difficulty in walking the boundaries. As far as my observation goes, the limits of the parishes and townships included in the grant are now precisely what they were in 994.

All names, whether of places or of persons, had originally some meaning, which instructs us as to the habits, thoughts,

and aspirations of the race using them. Anglo-Saxon personal names are readily interpreted, and I append the meaning of all the names used in the Charter.

Æthélred, noble counsel.
Sigeríc, victory ruler.
Ealdwulf, old wolf.
Ælfstán, elf stone (*elf* = a heathen deity)
Ælfheah, elf high.
Wulfsige, wolf-victory.
Ordbeorht, sword bright.
Wulfrún, wolf mystery, or council.
Ælfthryth, elf maiden.
Ælfweald, elf rule.
Sigegár, victory spear.
Ælfríc, elf ruler.
Ealdréd, old counsel.
Æscwíg, ash (spear) warrior.
Heathuwulf, war wolf.
Godwine, good friend.
Beorhtnóth, bright-brave.
Cénwulf, "keen" (fierce) wolf.
German, means a "German;" but he was a native of Winchester, became a Monk of Fleury, and was successively Prior of Westbury, Ramsey, and Abbot of Winchelcombe and Cholsey (Berkshire).
Ælfwíg, battle elf.
Ælfweard, elf ruler.
Léofríc, beloved ruler.
Æthelnóth, noble daring.
Ælfwine, elf friend.
Beorhthelm, bright helm.
Wulfríc, wolf ruler.
Léofwine, beloved friend.
Léofsige, beloved victory.
Ælfhelm, elf helm.
Æthelmær, noble renowned.
Wulfgéat, wolf Goth.
Wulfhéah, wolf high.

W. H. Duignan.

Walsall,
March, 1888.

Revised Translation of the Text in the Monasticon.

VI. 1443.

[From the Autograph itself, in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of the Royal Chapel of Windsor, A.D. 1640.]

IN the rule of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year 996 [1] from the passion of our said Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the seventh indiction, Sigeric, [2] Archbishop of the metropolitan city [of Canterbury], with all the Lord's flock of servants unceasingly serving God, satraps, dukes, princes, judges, and all the council of Christians, has granted a privilege to the noble matron and religious woman, Wulfrún, (in order that she may attain a seat in heaven, and that she may found a church in honour of the Lord and Saviour of the world, Who holds in his hands the heavens, who covers hell, and of the holy mother of God, the everlasting Virgin Mary, who is interpreted "the Star of the Sea," or "Lady of the peoples," and of all the Saints) that by her [Wulfrún] mass may be said unceasingly for ever in the same ancient monastery of Hamtun, which was constructed in now modern times, firmly, with common stability, as is enjoined in the canon by Saint Gregory, together with thy servant our pope, and our archbishop, so that our Christianity may profit by day and by night to better things, as our Saviour says in the Gospel, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there I am in the midst of them," says the Lord; and "if he say to this mulberry tree, 'root up and transplant in the sea,' and have not hesitated in his heart, but has believed,

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[1] A mistake of the copyist for 994; the seventh indiction (subsequently thrice given) falling in that year, and not in 996.

[2] Sigeric was Archbishop of Canterbury from 990 to 995. He was one of the faint-hearted advisers of Ethelred, who first introduced the wretched policy of purchasing peace from the Danes.

it shall be done for him." And elsewhere, "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." I have greatly desired that the religious intention, shown to continually pertain to the holy place, should be completed without any delay, God willing, and so often as for any of its uses or conveniences our assent and the defence of the usual apostolic authority is required, it becomes us to willingly assist, God willing, by the prompting of benignity, and to strengthen for entire security according to reason, in order that His forgiveness and health and indemnity may be provided for us, and also the most desirable prize of gain may be reserved by God, the founder of all, in the starry citadels. It has seemed befitting to your religious character to implore us that we should protect the aforesaid monastery of Hamtun of the holy mother of God, Mary, our lady, with the evidence of apostolic authority, and that we should conform in everlasting right all things pertaining to it to remain there inviolably.[1]

Wherefore, influenced by your prayers, we decree and ordain by this witness of our commandment, and in the present seventh indiction, if you have justly and reasonably petitioned us, and they are not held by other men, that all town lands, towns, or rustic lands, just as your aforesaid monastery of Hamtun held all things from old times, and you ought now to possess [them] more quietly with great security, and by you also they shall possess and hold to your just named monastery, or to your successors, abbots, or clerks, and shall defend enjoying jurisdiction for ever, and shall profit for ever in the utilities [easements?] of the same pious place; for which purpose and under the witness of the divine judgment, we do decree and promulgate, that in no wise shall any man of public life or any person of whatsoever dignity, great or small, have any power in the things, estates, cultivated or uncultivated, of the aforesaid monastery wherever you are seen to hold; nor

[1] There is singular confusion between the first and third persons, between Sigeric and Wulfrún, suggesting that the scribe started with the intention of putting Wulfrún's petition into the third person, and that he has occasionally forgotten his plan. The Archbishop's confirmation now follows.

shall he presume to carry away or despoil anything from the same pious place, but rather they shall remain in everlasting right in the same venerable monastery, as is above provided, and you and all your successors, abbots, or nuns shall have power to control and dispose and request (of them).

If anyone attempt (we wish that he may not) to come against or act against the evidence of this our apostolic authority, piously promulgated by us, let him know that he will be guilty at the judgment to be dreaded, and will have his portion with the impious, and will have his dwelling appointed with Pluto and the three headed Cerberus, unless he have previously made satisfaction to God. He who shall be a guardian and observer of this evidence of our apostolic injunction, shall merit to obtain the grace of benediction from our beneficent founder, our Lord Jesus Christ. Written by the pen, and ink, and hand of the notary and secretary of Æthelred king of the Angles, in the month of October, on Sunday the 17th Kalend, the 22nd moon, the 7th indiction.

I, Wulfrún, do grant to the proper patron and high-throned King of Kings, and (in honour of) the everlasting Virgin mother of God, Mary, and of all the saints, for the body of my husband, and of my soul, ten hides of land, [1] to that aforesaid monastery of the servants of God there, and in another convenient place another ten hides for the offences of Wulfgeat [2] my kinsman lest he should hear in the judgment to be dreaded from the severe Judge, "Go away from me, I hungered and thirsted," and so on. Because he is blessed who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Finally now my sole daughter, Elfthryth, has migrated from the world to the life-giving airs. For the third time I have granted

[1] It is impossible to say how many acres went to the hide. Kemble, and most authorities, say 120. Eyton says a Staffordshire hide was 955 acres; but his grounds are very shadowy. Quantities in ancient charters only included arable land; pasture and woodlands passed as appurtenant, and were generally held in common.

[2] Wulfgeat was for some years the chief adviser of Ethelred, and held lands in Worcestershire. He fell into disgrace, and his wife Ælgifu shared his "offences;" but only "unjust judgments" are specified. In 1006 he was deprived of his honors and all his lands.

10 hides to the almighty God, with ineffable charity, more willingly than the others [Which are surrounded by these territories]. [1]

These are the boundaries of the land that Wulfrún has given to the minster in Hamtun and the names of the towns that this *privilegium* refers to:

First of [2] Earn-leie [3] and Eswick [4] and Bilsetna-tun [5] and Willan-hale [6] and Wodnesfeld [7] and Peoles-hale [8] and Ocging-tun [9] and Hiltun [10] and Hagenthorndun [11] and Kynwaldes-tun [12] and another Hiltune [13] and Feotherstun. [14]

These are the boundaries of Earnley: [15]

First from Eares brook [16] to the short thorn; and from the short thorn to Wulfsige's horse-croft; and thence to the aldershaw; [17] and from the shaw to Eadwulf's croft; and from the croft to the ridge-way (?); [18] along the ridge-way [19] to the "earth breach;" [20] and thence downwards to the flax [line] lea; [21] and from the lea to the swine-pit; and from the pit to Heortreges [22] brook; along the brook to the mouth [of the brook]; and from the mouth to Byinnig-brook; and thence up along the brook to the sike [rivulet]; and from the sike to Sciteres-ford; [23] and from the ford

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[1] Thus far the Charter is in Latin; the continuation is in A.S.
[2] The following names are given as spelt in the Anglo-Saxon.
[3] Upper Arley.
[4] This name, I think, is lost. It is evidently an estate near Trysull.
[5] Bilston.
[6] Willenhall.
[7] Wednesfield.
[8] Pelsall.
[9] Ogley Hay, adjoining Pelsall.
[10] Hilton, near Wolverhampton.
[11] Hatherton, near Cannock.
[12] Kinvaston, near Hatherton.
[13] There is a mistake here; no other Hilton is described.
[14] Featherstone, near Hilton.
[15] In A.S. this would be pronounced Arnley; it is now Arley. The prefix Upper has been added, probably, to distinguish it from Arley Kings, six miles down Severn.
[16] The perambulation commences at the north end of the parish near Severn, and goes east.
[17] Alder-wood.
[18] The road between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth. Innumerable ancient roads bear the name of "ridgeway."
[19] The boundary still travels along the road for about two furlongs.
[20] An upheaval or bursting of the earth.
[21] Now called "Linneymore."
[22] There is a place hereabouts called Harts Green. *Heort* is A.S. for a hart.
[23] Now Shatterford. The A.S. *sc* is come to be pronounced *sh*.

to bromes-combe;[1] and from the combe to Æthelsige's boundaries; along Æthelsige's boundaries to Severn; down along Severn to the five oaks; from the five oaks to the [tree] stub; and from the stub to the street;[2] along the street to Wina's tree, and from the tree to Tudeles beck [rivulet]; along the beck to Severn; up along Severn to Léofric's boundaries; along the boundaries to Thorulf's way; from the way to the field enclosure (?); along the enclosure to Lamberde lea; and from the lea to Earesbrook where it began before; and over Fatesteall to Earnley at the village. And the mast of thirty swine in Scipricg [Sheepridge] belongs also to Earnley.

These are the boundaries of the land at Eswick:[3]

First from . . . . ebles beck to the dyke;[4] and from the dike to the Stour;[5] thence along the Stour into Tresel; up along Tresel to Shakers ford;[6] and from the ford to the *sike;* along the *sike* upward . . . to Belstow, and from Belstow to Tresel.

These are the land boundaries of Bilsetnatun[7] and of Wodnesfeld [Wednesfield]:

First from Hinde-brook[8] to the dyke between Ettingeshall and Bilsetnetun; along the dyke forth until it come where the dyke turns eastward; and from the dyke forth to the thorn where the three boundaries come together, [that is] Hantun and Ettingeshall and Bilsetnetun; and from the thorn to the wet-mere;

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[1] Now Ramscomb.
[2] The present road from Bewdley to Bridgnorth; the boundary still travels on the road a long mile.
[3] This may have been a grange (farm) belonging to the monastery. There is a road, near Trysull, still called "Monks-path."
[4] Probably a dyke (ditch) made by the monks to mark the boundary.
[5] We now call the upper waters of the Stour, Smestow.
[6] In the original, *Scakeresford;* it is doubtful if Shakersford is the right translation; possibly the name in some form still survives.
[7] This is the first time Bilston is met with in "history." In Domesday it is Billestune; subsequently, as far as my knowledge goes, Bilstone.
[8] The brook of the hind (female stag). Bilston is not a hunting country now; but in 1354, when the Forest of Cannock was perambulated, the old road from Wolverhampton to Wednesbury bridge was declared to be the north western boundary of the Forest. I cannot identify Hindbrook, but the perambulation certainly commences near Moxley.

and from the mere to the ford where Beorgyth's stone street [1] lies over [*i.e.*, passes through]; and from the ford to the dyke that lies between the boundaries of Wodnesfeld and Hamtun; and northward forth along the dyke; then to Piots thorn; and from the thorn along the dyke to "Penwie," where the boundaries of Wodnesfeld and Hamtun and Biscopesburh [Bushbury] come together; [2] and forth along "Penwie" [3] to Bury brook; [4] and from the brook thence to the aldershaw; and along the aldershaw to the sike; [5] and along the sike [6] to the street; [7] and forth along the old street to the hoar-stone; [8] and from the stone to the swine pens; and from the swine pens along the street [9] to the dyke; along the dyke then to Kirnes-ford; [10] and from the ford along port street [11] to the white sike; [12] and along the sike, to the brook, to Beadgyth's bourn [brook]; and from the bourn to land brook, [13] along the brook to Maiden's ford, along the brook into the dike [where] it previously commenced from the brook [*i.e.*, hind-brook]. [14]

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[1] Beorgyth is a woman's name. Stone street would be a paved road, probably near Goldthorn Hill.
[2] On the Showells farm near Spa well.
[3] The old Cannock Road, now called Park Lane, running between the Showells and Old Fallings and Tromelowe farms.
[4] The brook immediately beyond the third mile-stone on the Cannock road. By a curious coincidence this brook now defines the new Parliamentary "borough" of Wolverhampton.
[5] From the head of the brook to "the Moat house," thence to the "Gospel Trees" standing in the road from Wolverhampton to Wyrley, thence to Blackhalves, on the crest of the hill.
[6] The sike or ditch runs straight south west for a mile and a half.
[7] The ancient road from Wolverhampton to Lichfield, a little east of the New Invention.
[8] A great stone, lying in the ditch on the south side of the road midway between Perry Hall and Marsh End. Great stones were often used as boundary marks, and were then called Hoar stones.
[9] Now Noose lane.
[10] Near Moseley Hole.
[11] Now known as the Portway; it comes from Wednesbury, where it is still called the Portway, to Catherines Cross, Darlaston; thence by Bunker's Hill to Moseley Hole, where I think, it bifurcated (as is common in British ways), one branch passing through Heath Town, by the Newbolds and Old Fallings, and over Bushbury Hill, where it is now broken; the other by Nechells, Wednesfield, and the Pear Tree, uniting at Northicote and falling into the Stafford Road at Coven. This is said to have been an old pack way from London to Chester.
[12] In Cold Lane.
[13] Land brook means a brook marking the boundary of a "land," or "estate."
[14] This clearly brings the perambulation back into the vicinity of Moxley.

These are the boundaries between Kinewaldestun [Kinvaston] [1] and Eatun [Eaton]:

First from the brook to the head [of the brook]; to the dike; along the dike to the other dike; along the brook into Penchrich [Penkridge]; along Penchrich [2] until it comes to the dike; along the dike into salt mere; there over the mere to the dike; beside the dike towards the east, unto the rye-croft, to the foul brook; [3] along the brook where they first began [the perambulation]. And there also pertain the five acres at Twe-fyrd [4] into Kineusldestun to the calves' hedge. [5]

These are the boundaries of Haguthorndune [Hatherton]:

First from Seares [6] brook's ford to the hollow way; and from the way to the long street; [7] and from the street to the boundary hedge; forth along the hedge to the three boundaries; and from the three boundaries to Æthelwig's hedge; to the field; to the low; [8] and thence to the dike at the shaw [wood]; along the dike by the valley; by the mast oak; along the valley up to the water; and thence eastward to the other valley; along by the valley to the white stones; and there to the street [9] that issues from the bog; along the street by the hedge of the "haw" [enclosure]; along by the street to the white "syke;" along by the "sike" to the white hall; and then to the brook; along the brook thence into Seares brook always afterwards [*sic*] along the brook again to the ford where it started from.

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[1] A small estate adjoining the Gailey reservoirs and Watling Street, now belonging to A. S. Hill, Esq., M.P.

[2] That is the boundary of Penkridge (parish); the village is some miles away.

[3] There is a wood here called Fullmoor Wood bounded by a brook.

[4] This may be Twy-ford or Twi-frith. Frith is a wood or park.

[5] This name survives in Calf Heath, an extensive tract of recently enclosed land adjoining Watling Street.

[6] We have probably in this word "Seares" (a man's name) the root of the names of the adjoining parishes, "Shares-hill" and Sare-don (*dun*, a hill). A family named Saer, and Sayer, have been settled in this locality from time immemorial, and still reside there.

[7] Probably Watling Street.

[8] A tumulus or burial place.

[9] Probably Watling Street. Shaw (vol. i. p. 33.) mentions "two lows on Calves Heath, near the road side from Somerford to Four Crosses," and "another in some enclosed ground east of Great Saredon." These ancient tumuli were very frequently adopted as landmarks. Watling Street still forms the boundary of Hatherton between the Gailey reservoirs and Calf Heath.

These are the boundaries at Hiltun [Hilton] and at Feotherestan [Featherstone]:

First from Brenesford [1] along the street [2] to the lece [3] brook; upwards along the brook to the stony ford; [4] by the side of the street [5] until it come to the dike; by the side of the dike to the head [of the dike]; by the side of the head to the stony way; [6] thence to Æthelwig's hedge; [7] forth by the hedge of his enclosure until it come to the great moor; [8] and thence to the old *burg;* [9] and thence to the eastern lea; and so forth to Leofwine's hedge; along the hedge to cress-well; and thence to the hill; and from the hill to the head; forth along by the head to the other hill; along the hill to . . . . . e wellspring near Esingetun [Essington]; and from the well on swine-down; and thence to the hoar stone; [10] and from the stone transversly over the moor [11]

[1] Now Brinsford, the name of a farm lying two furlongs to the east of the Stafford Road, at 4½ miles from Wolverhampton.

[2] I cannot identify this "street;" it is close to. if not part of, the Portway referred to in Note 11 p. 12.

[3] Meaning boggy. The word *lech* or *lach* is often the name of a wet field or farm. "Far Laches" is the name of a farm on Featherstone boundary. A brook, perhaps still known as Lech or Lach brook, runs from Hilton Park to "Far Laches," and forms the boundary of Featherstone, until it crosses the Cannock Road, 6 miles from Wolverhampton, where Hilton commences.

[4] Where the Cannock Road then "forded" the brook.

[5] The road from Cannock to Wolverhampton. The boundary descends the road (toward Wolverhampton) for about a mile, and then turns acutely eastward.

[6] The road entering Hilton Park at the extreme S.W. corner; it is a stony way still.

[7] The bank of Ethelwig's hedge is very apparent in the park; it commences at the stony way, about 60 yards from the S.W. entrance, and runs up the hill, due east, for about a furlong, then turns acutely south; it has obviously also extended due north, but the bank has been almost levelled.

[8] The boundary here is still marsh land.

[9] This spot is now known as Beechy Head, and is part of a wood belonging to A. L. Vernon, Esq., of Hilton Park. Mr. Vernon has kindly allowed me to inspect the boundary, and added to the obligation by giving me the advantage of his company and local knowledge. The word *burg* has various meanings; it may describe a fort, a town, or a hamlet. There are no traces of a fort, and the expression "old burg" leads one to infer that the site of an ancient *disused* village was intended to be described. At this spot there are seven small pits, within a few yards of each other, now (November) mostly containing water. No one can remember their being made, or suggest any use for them, as the subsoil is clay. I think it probable that they mark the dwellings of an ancient race. Similar excavations are found on the site of many British villages, and the late Sir R. C. Hoare had no doubt as to their uses. Some of the pits here may have been enlarged, deepened, or united, for ornamental purposes, or for fishing, and the presence of water in them presents no difficulty, as they occupy the crest of a small hill, and could have been readily drained.

[10] Now "Warstone," a common corruption of "hoar stone." The boundary of Hilton is still here, and there is a great stone in the fence of the field opposite the rickyard, which may be the "hoar stone;" but this is a boulder country, and there are many large stones hereabout.

[11] The boundary runs on the north edge of Hilton Park, and then turns south on the Cannock Road until it meets a brook (7½ miles from Wolverhampton), which rises in Hilton Park, and runs to Brinsford by Brook House; this brook still forms the boundary of Featherstone.

to Ebrook; along the brook to Brún's ford [1] where it first began.

These are the land boundaries of Ogintune: [2]

First to the great alders; along the moor to Warsawell; from the [well] to the dike; along the dike to the fen at the swine-cote; thence to the hedge; along the hedge thence right forwards to the black lea; on the lea south forwards again to the [street]; along the street to the ford; along the brook against the stream to the dike; along the dike thence to the ford; to the brook; along the brook against the stream; thence on . . . . . ge street; along the street thence to the dike; along the dike thence again to the great alders.

These are the land boundaries to Peoleshale [3] [Pelsall]:

First on Peolsford; from Peolsford along the brook against the stream; thence to the great moor; on the moor; thence on

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[1] Previously mentioned as Brenesford; which is right, and whether the mistake rests with the original scribe or with the copyist, it is impossible to say.

[2] Shaw, without comment or authority, translates Ogintune into Essington; and Oliver follows him. They are clearly wrong. Essington never belonged to the Canons of Hampton. Domesday records it as the property of William fitz Ansculf, and as having belonged to the Countess Godeva in the time of Edward the Confessor. The priests could never have been dispossessed of it without record or outcry; and the reference to Essington in the boundaries of Hilton and Featherstone is quite inconsistent with its being their property. I have no doubt that Ogintune is what is now known as Ogley Hay, near Pelsall; until recently one of the Hayes in Cannock Forest, and still a separate Manor. The description accords with that of wild land, and Ogley Hay is crossed by three ancient roads, the old Chester, Blake Street, and Watling Street; the latter is probably referred to in ". . . . . ge street," which I interpret Watlinge street. In the 13th century Dean Giles (who died about 1242) and the Chapter of Wolvern Hamton granted to William Ruffus, of Walsall, "a certain wood which is called Hogeley," bounded (*inter alios locos*) by Watling Street; rendering to them four pounds of wax yearly for all services. Ogley Hay is now so altered, by inclosure, that I am unable to identify, in detail, the description given in the text.

3] This is printed in the Monasticon, "Weoleshealle;" and Shaw, again without comment or authority, interprets it "Walsall;" and Oliver follows him. It is not possible to be Walsall, as the priests of Hampton never owned a rood of land there. The adjoining township of "Pelsall" has belonged to them time out of mind, and still belongs to their successors, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Domesday returns them as its owners. No part of the description could be applied to Walsall at any period. The problem long lay heavy on the mind of that learned and industrious antiquary, Mr. R. W. Gillespie, of Walsall. At last the happy thought suggested itself to him that W was a misprint for P, and the difficulty vanished. These letters, in Anglo-Saxon, are so much alike that a careless copyist, or printer, would readily transpose them. Reference to the Charter in the Monasticon discloses many such errors; letters are omitted or transposed, and words split in two in such a way as to show that the text has never been revised by any one capable of reading Anglo-Saxon proofs, and there are some evident omissions at the end. The Latin version of the parcels is certainly no part of the original Charter, but a much later translation, and is confused by parenthetical notes, so printed as to seem part of the text.

rye-halls; and from rye-halls to the brook; along the brook against the stream; thence to the hoary [or boundary] willow; from the willow thence on the harts' wallowing place (heorot-sol); to the hunter's path; from the hunter's path to Thelford; from Thelford along . . . . . midstream; hence to Ordsey [1]; to the brook; along the brook against the stream; thence to Peolsford again. [2]

I have written to the triple lord of Lords, to thy earthly lord Ethelred (you) obeying him faithfully, because thou canst in no wise acquire the peace of that Lord of Lords, unless thou remain faithful to the end to thy earthly lord. These decrees we Archbishop Sigeric have brought forwards in court before King Æthelred and the Archbishop of York, and all the bishops, abbots of the region of Britain, or the senators, dukes, and people of the land, and they, as we have before said, have vowed to keep it in all things, with the aid of the celestial clemency, according to the power of their strength with all devotion of mind, and with joyful visages, and they have confirmed it with the sign of the holy cross in our turn in our hand, and have afterwards written with diligent pen in the charter of evidence the sign of the holy cross.

I, Æthelred, by the grace of God King of the Angles, and patrician of the Northumbrians, consenting, have subscribed with the sign of the holy cross, in the third olympiad of my reign.

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[1] Ord's island, or water, now called "the Moss pits," below Shelfield mill. The locality gave its name to a family of "de Ordeseye," members of which were frequent witnesses to local deeds in the 13th and 14th centuries. (See Walsall Calendar, Nos. 3, 5, 8, and 11.)

[2] The description is clearly Pelsall. The permabulation commences in the road between Goscote and Pelsall Hall (probably the site of Peoles "healle" or house), at the point where Clock Mill Brook crosses it; thence up the brook and over fields into Fishley Lane; thence across the north end of Pelsall Wood, and through a large meadow now called Telford meadow, partly in Pelsall and partly in Norton Canes; doubtless the "Thelford" mentioned in the Charter. *Thel* in A.S. is a plank, and as the meadow adjoins a brook, there was probably a plank crossing over it at this point. The boundary then passes down the stream to the south-eastern end of the township. *Ordeisie* means Ords island, or water, and I think it likely that "Ford" brook—the present name of the stream—is a mere corruption of "Ord." The south boundary then passes, in almost a straight line, through Heath End to Clock Mill Brook in Slacky Lane, and then up the brook to "Peol's ford." Pelsall lay within the limits of Cannock Forest, and is even yet on the borders of the Chase. "The great moor," "the harts' wallowing place," and "the hunter's path," all lie on the Chase side.

I, Sigeric, [1] by the will of God Archbishop of the metropolitan city and of the church of Canterbury, have signed the evidence of this pious and catholic Charter with the sign of the holy cross.

I, Ealdwulf, archbishop of the church of York, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ælfstan, bishop of the church of London, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ælfheah, [2] bishop of the church of Winchester, have consented and subscribed.

I, Wulfsige, bishop of the church of Sherburn, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ordbeorht, bishop of the church of Selsey, have obediently subscribed.

I, Ælfweald, bishop of the church of Crediton, have consented and subscribed.

I, Sigegar, bishop of the church of Wells, have obediently subscribed.

I, Ælfric, bishop of the church of Corfe, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ealdred, bishop of the church of Cornwall, have obediently subscribed.

I, Æscwig, bishop of the church of Dorchester, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ælfheah, bishop of the church of Lichfield, have obediently subscribed.

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[1] The A.S. Chronicle says, "An: 995. In this year appeared cometa, the Star; and Archbishop Sigeric died; and Ælfric bishop of Wiltshire was chosen on Easter Day (April 21) by King Æthelred and by all his 'witan.'" This further shows that the Charter was signed in 994, and not in 996.

[2] Ælfheah was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1012 he was captured by the Danes, "and because he would not promise them any money, but forbade that anything should be given for him. . . they then shamefully murdered him; they pelted him with bones and with the heads of oxen and one of them struck him on the head with an axe-iron, so that with the dint he sank down, and his holy blood fell on the earth, and his holy soul he sent forth to God's Kingdom" (A.S. Chronicle). He was sainted, and lies in Canterbury.

I, Heathuwulf, bishop of the church of Hereford, have consented and subscribed.

I, Godwine, [1] bishop of the church of Rochester, have, with placid mind, consented and subscribed with golden mouth [A] and the sign of the holy cross.

I, the suppliant servant of Christ, abbot Beorhtnoth, have obediently subscribed.

I, German, monk and abbot of Fleury, have subscribed.

I, Cenwulf, [2] abbot, have subscribed.

I, Ælfwig, [3] abbot, have subscribed.

I, Ælfric, abbot, have subscribed.

I, Ælfweard, [4] abbot, have subscribed.

I, Leofric, abbot, who am called by another name Æthelnoth, [5] have subscribed.

I, Ælfwine, abbot, have subscribed.

I, Æthelric, [6] abbot, have subscribed.

I, Beorhthelm, abbot, have subscribed.

I, Wulfric, abbot, have subscribed.

I, Leofwine, [7] duke. [8]

I, Æthelweard, [9] duke, consenting so affixing.

I, Wulsige, deacon, have subscribed with the sign of the holy cross.

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[1] Godwine was captured by the Danes in 1011; he is recorded as dying in 1061, so he must have been a very young Bishop in 994, or have attained a great age.
[2] Abbot of Peterborough.
[3] Bishop of London in 1014.
[4] Abbot of Evesham, and a leper. At the time of his death (1045) he was Bishop of London.
[5] An Æthelnoth was Archbishop of Canterbury 1022–1038.
[6] Æthelric died in 1038, Bishop of Selsey.
[7] Slain in battle with the Danes in 1001.
[8] The attestations are in Latin, and the word used is "dux." I adopt the translation "duke" because it is the common one. The Anglo-Saxons had no "dukes" as we understand the word, and no hereditary titles. "Dux" means "a leader, a commander," and I think should be translated "Ealdorman," (whence our "Alderman,") which is the title given in the A.S. Chronicle to all the men here termed "dux."
[9] Slain in battle with the Danes in 1001.

[A] This expression is probably unique. In the text it is *crisostomo ore*, where the first word (= Greek *chrysostomos*) means "golden mouth." When the scribe so needlessly added the Latin word for mouth, it is clear that he did not know what *chrysostomos* meant; he probably thought it meant "with ready mouth," "willingly," &c.

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I, Ælfweard, deacon.

I, Ælfric, [1] duke, consenting have subscribed.

I, Leofsige, [2] duke, have consented and subscribed.

I, Ælfhelm, duke of the Northumbrians.

I, Æthelmær, count, [3] have subscribed with the sign of the holy cross.

I, Wulfgeat, minister (=thegn).

I, Wulfheah, minister.

I, Æthelric, minister.

I, Æthelnoth, minister.

I, Æthelweard, minister.

To these salutary admonitions with the priests, deacons, and abbots of the monasteries, we the judges, optimates, and nobles, have consented unanimously and have subscribed.

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[1] Ælfric was a prominent character of the time. In 992 he was accused of treachery during battle with the Danes, and Ethelred was base enough to revenge himself by putting out the eyes of Ælfgar, his son. In 994 we find him restored to favor, and in 1016 he expiated all his sins, and died for his country in the great fight at Assandun.

[2] Leofsige concluded a "peace" with the Danes in 1002, and paid them £24,000. He was afterwards banished for the murder of Æfic, the king's high reeve.

[3] Literally "companion." The word is only used in late A.S. Charters; the earlier equivalent title was "eorl," a warrior, hero; from which we derive our "earl."

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